



EXHIBIT 14
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HB HB 191

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Re: HB 191 – Pit Bull Ban

My name is Angie McDunn with McDunn K9 Behavioral Consulting and Training. As a behaviorist and trainer, I regularly deal with dogs with aggression issues from a variety of settings, including shelters, rescue groups and private owners. With the shelters and rescue groups, I am asked to evaluate dogs to determine if they are aggressive and if their behavior can be modified through training and rehabilitation to make them safe companion animals that can be placed for adoption. Individual owners usually contact me after an incident has occurred, not necessarily involving a bite, but involving a show of aggression that has caused them concern. Having been working with dogs for over 20 years now, with over 15 of those years dealing with dogs with aggression issues I am confident saying that I am an expert in dog aggression and bite behavior.

My most recent case involved a 3 year old, neutered male Australian Shepherd. After meeting with and interviewing the owner and then working with the dog, I can honestly tell you that his owner has anxiety and self-confidence issues that are directly responsible for the behavior of her dog. In the dog's mind, she is the weaker pack member and because all packs need a leader, he is forced into the role of leader, when that is not where he wants to be either. He feeds off of her insecurities and they are triggering his aggressive behavior towards people both in her home and on the street even when he is leashed. Since she is incapable of changing how she feels and deals with life at this time, the decision was made to contact a rescue group that could rehabilitate this dog and place it in a home with someone who can be a proper leader for the dog.

This is just one example of the hundreds of cases I have dealt with, but it illustrates a fundamental key to the behavior of dogs in our society. That is the element of leadership. Without good leadership on the part of dog owners, any and all breeds can and will exhibit unwanted and even dangerous behaviors.

HB 191 is a poor attempt to fix a larger problem within our society; irresponsible dog ownership.

A five year study published in the Cincinnati Law Review in 1982, vol. 53, pg 1077, which specifically considered both Rottweilers and "pit bulls," concluded in part that:

- statistics do not support the assertion that any one breed was dangerous, - when legislation is focused on the type of dog it fails, because it is ... unenforceable, confusing, and costly. - focusing legislation on dogs that are "vicious" distracts attention from the real problem, which is irresponsible owners.

Human-aggressive pit bulls are not characteristic of the breed. Human-aggression in the bull breeds is not permissible by any club's breed standard. This is why non-breed-specific legislation is so important. It covers all vicious dogs, regardless of breed.

The National Canine Research Council (www.nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com) Year-End Report for 2007 concluded:

Extensive research and investigation using 40 years of data has conclusively identified the reckless and criminal ownership practices that can cause a dog to become dangerous:

OWNER MANAGEMENT & CONTROL OF DOGS

Owners failing to humanely contain, control and maintain their dogs (chained dogs, loose roaming dogs, cases of abuse/neglect), and owners failing to properly supervise interaction between children and dogs.

FUNCTION OF DOG

Owners maintaining dogs for guarding/protection, fighting, intimidation/status, or as yard dogs. Such dogs are resident dogs, not family pets.

REPRODUCTIVE STATUS OF DOG

Owners failing to spay or neuter animals not used for competition, show, or in a responsible breeding program.

91% of all fatal dog attacks from 2005-2007 were due to one or more of these critical factors.

Tabulations of fatal dog attacks by breed yield no understanding of human/canine interaction and offer no remedies to enhance community safety. Forty years ago, Pit bulls and Rottweilers combined were involved in less than 2% of all fatal attacks.³⁶ Nevertheless, one or more of these same critical factors was evident in 90% of all fatal dog attacks during that time.

From 2005-2007, increased focus on the negligent and criminal human behaviors has resulted in 31% of owners and/or parents of young victims being criminally charged.

HOLDING OWNERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE HUMANE TREATMENT, CONTAINMENT, AND CONTROL OF THEIR DOGS IS THE ONLY WAY TO MINIMIZE INCIDENCE OF CANINE AGGRESSION.

The National Canine Research Council also reports that as of "January 7, 2009, the United Kingdom's largest animal welfare charity, the RSPCA has joined forces with other organizations to publicly call for an end to the unfair law that results in dogs being deemed 'dangerous' as a result of their physical appearance."

And:

The Dutch government says it will lift a long-standing ban on pit bulls because it did not lead to any decrease in bite incidents. *

Agriculture Minister Gerda Verburg has informed parliament of the decision, which follows the advice of a commission of experts appointed to review the policy.

Instead, the country will focus on enforcing local leashing laws and owner education programs.

Spokesman Koen Geelink said Monday the ministry hopes to have a new policy in place by year-end, in which dogs that have displayed aggression will be tested by an expert.

***In 1999, six years after the ban on Pit bulls in the Netherlands, the Dutch Consumer Safety Institute reported that dog bites continued with approx. 12,000 people being treated in emergency departments and with 220 hospitalizations.**

Additionally, in the years after the ban, at least 3 children were killed by dogs in the Netherlands.

Please be aware that that any dog can bite. No one breed should be singled out. Each dog should be looked at individually and its temperament judged by a professional. Those animals with bite histories that pose a threat to the community should be euthanized to prevent further injuries and to maintain a safe community. We need to punish irresponsible dog owners as well as those individuals who abuse/neglect or use dogs for fighting purposes.